

9
MESSAGE

FROM THE

GOVERNOR,

VETOING THE

LOCAL APPROPRIATION BILL.

READ IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MAY 9, 1839

HARRISBURG :

BOAS & COPLAN—PRINTERS.

1839.

MESSAGE.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

GENTLEMEN—The bill, entitled “An act making appropriations to “certain turnpikes, state roads, &c., within this commonwealth, and “for other purposes,” has been presented to me for executive approbation; but as I cannot give that approbation to this bill consistently with my own sense of duty, I return it to the house of representatives in which it originated, with my objections.

It makes large appropriations to the payment of the debts of several incorporated companies, to the building of bridges, the improvement of streams, the repair of various turnpike roads, and the building a hall in the city of Lancaster, many or all of which objects might be perfectly proper and right had the commonwealth a superabundance of funds. But at a time when we are laboring under an existing state debt of upwards of thirty millions of dollars, it does not appear to me that it would be either prudent or proper to borrow money or tax the people to raise funds to give away with so profuse a hand, on improvements, many of which are secondary at least in character and general importance. If it were even advisable to increase the state debt for this purpose under any circumstances, the present is not a propitious time, as there is difficulty in procuring money for existing responsibilities on favorable terms, and that difficulty would no doubt be increased by increasing the amount required.

This bill makes the following appropriations to the objects named, viz :

Hanover and Carlisle turnpike road company,	\$2,000
Roseburg and Mercer turnpike road company,	2,000
Bloody run and Hollidaysburg turnpike road company,	5,000
Doylestown and Willow Grove turnpike road company,	7,500
Butler and Emlenton turnpike road company,	\$2,000
Bald Eagle, Brush and Penns valley turnpike road company,	1,500

Butler and Freeport turnpike road company,	1,500
Downingtown, Ephrata and Harrisburg turnpike road company,	10,000
Browningtown, Harrisville and Franklin turnpike road company,	2,000
Waynesburg, Greencastle and Mercersburg turnpike road company,	3,000
Lewistown and Huntingdon turnpike road company,	2,000
Hollidaysburg and Punxsatawney state road,	2,000
Indiana and Ebensburg turnpike road company,	1,000
Franklin and Warren turnpike road company,	1,500
Sugar Grove and Warren turnpike road company,	1,000
Lancaster and Litiz turnpike road company,	3,000
Mechanics' society of Lancaster, for the purpose of building a mechanics' hall,	3,000
Somerset and Conemaugh turnpike road company,	5,500
Millerstown and Lewistown turnpike road company,	2,000
The turnpike road company from Potter's old fort to Waterstreet,	1,500
Johnstown and Ligonier turnpike road company,	4,000
Centreville and Donegal turnpike road company,	2,000
Mount Pleasant and Pittsburg turnpike road company,	2,000
Dillsburg and York turnpike road company,	5,000
Monongahela bridge at Williamsport,	3,000
Allegheny bridge at Franklin,	10,000
Constructing a bridge over the Swatara at Zimmerman's ford, Lebanon county,	1,500
Somerset and Bald hill turnpike road company,	3,000
Peters' mountain turnpike road company,	1,000
Kiskiminetas bridge company at Saltsburg,	2,000
Stony creek bridge company at Johnstown,	1,500
Lenox and Harmony turnpike road company,	5,000
Armstrong and Curwensville turnpike road company,	1,500
Waterstreet and Clearfield turnpike road company,	1,500
Bethany and Canaan turnpike road company,	1,500
Lackawaxen turnpike road company,	1,500
Birmingham and Elizabeth turnpike road company,	3,000
Elizabeth turnpike road company,	\$3,000
Meadville and Titusville turnpike road company,	1,000

Bustletown and Smithfield turnpike road company,	3,000
Pittsburg and Steubenville turnpike road company,	3,000
Pittsburg and Kittanning state road,	1,000
New Buck road from Newton to Smithfield,	2,000
Grading Flint hill,	500
Butler and Beaver state road.	2,000
Pittsburg and Brownington state road,	2,000
New Castle and Butler state road,	2,000
The road leading from the upper meeting house in Path valley, Franklin county, to Shade Gap, Huntingdon county,	1,200
State road leading from Concord, Franklin county, to James Campbell's, Perry county,	800
Morgantown and Wheeling state road,	3,000
Emlenton and New Castle state road,	1,000
Butler and Graham's ferry state road,	1,000
Waynesburg and Blackville state road,	1,500
State road leading from the White horse tavern on the Allegheny mountain, to the Virginia state line,	2,500
Ruff's creek state road,	1,000
Bellefonte and Caldwell's mill road,	1,000
Curwensville and Indiana state road,	2,000
Warren and Smethport state road,	2,000
Warren and West creek state road,	500
The erection of a bridge over the Lehigh at Salisbury church,	1,000
Bridge over Little Lehigh at Edelman's mill,	1,000
State road from Allentown to Pottstown,	1,000
The state road between Harrisburg and Sunbury,	1,000
The state road from Easton to Milford,	3,000
To improve the navigation of Big Bushkill creek,	4,000
The state road from Newport to New Germantown,	2,000
The state road from White horse to the Virginia state line,	2,000
The erection of a bridge over Castleman's river at Lechty's ford,	2,000
The state road from Seely's creek to intersect the Coudersport and Olean road,	5,000
The state road from Mercer to the Ohio state line,	3,000
The state road from Mifflinburg to Liverpool, &c.	1,500
The Butler and Franklin graded road,	\$2,000
The Brookville and Tionesta state road,	2,000

The erection of a bridge on the state road from Orwigsburg to Reagan's iron works,	2,000
To bridges on the Pittsburg and Morgantown state road,	5,000
The state road from Middletown to Pittsburg,	3,000
The erection of a bridge over the Raystown branch, in the borough of Bedford,	3,000
The state road from Dunning's to Pittsburg,	2,000
The state road from Kiskiminitas to Connells ville,	2,000
To make a road round Blue hill,	3,000
The state road from Irish ripple to Sharon,	1,200
The state road from Bridgewater to Ohio state line,	1,000
The erection of a bridge over Coopers rock creek, near Peach bottom,	500
Repairing bridge over same on the Castle Fin forge road,	200
The erection of bridges over the same stream on the state Quarry road,	1,500
The state road from Darlington to the Ohio state line,	500
The state road from Georgetown to Darlington,	500
The state road from Beaver to Little Beaver bridge,	1,000
The state road from New Brighton to Samuel Smiley's	800
The road from Beaver to the Ohio state line,	1,000
The stock of the bridge company at Centreville,	2,000
The erection of a bridge over Blacklick creek,	1,000
The Ebensburg and Stoystown state road,	2,000
The state road from Shippensburg to Drake's ferry,	2,000
The state road from Mercer to New Castle,	2,000
The state road from Petersburg in Somerset county, to the clay-pike east of Connells ville,	1,500
The road from Kiskiminitas salt works, to the Virginia state line,	1,000
The road leading from Robbstown to the Virginia state line,	2,000
The state road leading from the white horse tavern to the Virginia state line.	2,000
Road from Waterford to Wattsburg,	500
The state road from Waynesburg to the national road at widow Griffin's,	1,000
The state road from Stevens' tavern to the clay pike east Connells ville,	\$500

The road from Elizabethtown to Uniontown,	2,500
The Titusville and Union mills turnpike road company,	1,000
Bridge across the West branch, on the Milesburg and Smethport turnpike,	6,000
The bridge across the West branch on the Tyrone state road,	2,000
The state road from Curwensville to East Liberty,	2,000
The state road from Tamaqua to Mauch Chunk,	1,500
The state road from William R. M'Laurey's, to the Sterling and Newfoundland turnpike,	2,000
The Erie and Warren state road,	1,000
The state road from Montrose to Wellsboro',	1,000
The road leading from Nazareth to the Easton and Wilkes-barre turnpike road,	1,000
To the grading of part of the state road from the city of Philadelphia to the Maryland state line,	1,200
The grading of the state road from West Philadelphia to the borough of West Chester,	2,000
The road from Landisburg to Carlisle,	2,000
Clearing out Mushanon creek,	2,000
The state road from Mountpleasant to Joseph Smith's mill on the Youghiogheny river,	1,000
The state road from Milford to the mouth of the Shehold creek,	1,500
Erecting bridges over Chester and Ridley {creeks, on the state road leading from Chadsford to Philadelphia,	1,500
The erection of a bridge over Slippery Rock creek near Akin's mills,	2,000
The state road from Allentown to West Chester,	600
The state road from Astinville to Elmira,	1,000
The state road from Gettysburg to Newville,	1,200
The lake Pleasant road,	1,000
The erection of a bridge across the river Schuylkill, called the Flying hill bridge,	6,500
The repairing of the state road from the town of Catawissa to the centre turnpike,	1,000
The erection of a bridge over Muddy creek, near the forge of the late Thomas Coleman,	800
In the message which I submitted to the Legislature on the 26th	

day of January last, I took occasion to communicate at some length, my views relative to the system of internal improvements, in which this commonwealth is so deeply embarked.

I will again state in a few words, the general principles, that in my opinion ought to regulate the action of our government in carrying that system into effect, so far as the same have a direct bearing on the subject under consideration.

The primary object avowed by all departments of the government, in the commencement of our system of internal improvements, was to secure to our commercial emporium, a due portion of the increasing western trade or commerce, and to develop the immense mineral resources of this commonwealth, distributed throughout the coal and iron fields, in such exhaustless abundance, and the agricultural productions of her fertile vallies in her interior, northern and western counties. To carry this design into operation, the main lines between Philadelphia and Pittsburg and the lakes were first undertaken, and the coal and iron fields of the north and northwest, penetrated by the Susquehanna canals.

The immediate tributaries of the main lines, opening into rich mineral deposits, of course form a part of the system, and are necessary to its entire completion. To secure the trade of the western states, and of the north-western portion of New York, was also an essential object of the founders of our improvement system.

Experience clearly demonstrates the wisdom and sound policy of the undertaking. Had all the energy and means of the commonwealth been devoted to the vigorous prosecution of this system in its original simplicity, the state would now be reaping the full fruits of her expenditures, and the public debt would not have been swelled to its present enormous amount. Influenced, however, by unfortunate causes and councils, the legislation of the state has recently tended to distract the attention and divide the means of the public, by the prosecution of various undertakings, unconnected with the main lines, and in many instances, wholly for the benefit of private companies; thus placing the public means under their unlimited control, when the faith of the commonwealth was already pledged to apply its resources to the completion of its own works, and to the payment of its own liabilities. It is manifest at a glance, that just so far as the original system has been departed from, so far has

the system itself been retarded, and the public money been squandered upon unproductive objects. I do not mean to say these objects may not have been of great value to particular sections and particular individuals, but the public at large had not the same interest in them, nor could their commencement or even completion, materially contribute to the prosecution of the main design. I rank them accordingly among that class of secondary improvements which should not be undertaken by the commonwealth, while others of much greater importance remain unfinished and unprofitable.

It has only been within the few last years, that this infraction of the internal improvement system, has been carried to the greatest extent. The drains upon the treasury of the commonwealth, through a thousand unseen channels, have frittered down her resources, crippled her energies, and involved her in the most inextricable difficulties. To a person not intimately acquainted with the facts, it would be a question not easily to solve, from an examination of the recent appropriation bills,, whether the main lines of our improvements, were prosecuted on account of their intrinsic importance, or merely as pretexts for lavishing upon numberless other subordinate objects, millions of dollars of the money of the people. In some instances, as in that of the bill under consideration, the appropriations to secondary objects have been made first, while the appropriations to the main lines have thus far failed entirely. It will be but one step further in the departure from the original system, to drop the main lines altogether and henceforth disperse the treasure of the commonwealth among incorporated companies, local prejudices, local interests, and expert bargaining to secure in the general scramble, the largest share of the public money.

It is far from my intention to attribute to any of these motives, or to the influence of any of these causes, the formation of the present bill. I am speaking of the direct tendency of this course of legislation, to what consequences it must inevitably lead; not to what result it has already reached in its progressive influence on the legislation of the commonwealth.

Unless a radical change of my opinion should take place, I can never yield my sanction to the predominancy of this innovation on our internal improvement system. I conceive it to be at open variance with judicious economy, sound policy and enlightened legislation.

Thus viewing it, I should be recreant to my duty were I to sanction this bill. No man can be more reluctant than I am to exert the veto power. I shall never do it on light or trivial occasions; still less shall I claim to set up my opinion in opposition to that of the two houses of assembly; but when the completion of the main lines of improvement and the interest of the people are all involved in a measure, I cannot hesitate in the adoption of my course.

It is highly desirable no doubt, to those concerned, that the debts of all turnpike companies, and in fact all other companies in the commonwealth should be paid. But the question is at this time, shall we borrow money to pay them, when it requires the joint exertion of every branch of the government to sustain its credit, which has been already stretched to its utmost limit to satisfy existing liabilities, and to defray the expenses incident to the management of the public affairs. I cannot believe the people of Pennsylvania are prepared to answer this question in the affirmative. If I have misconceived my duty, or misunderstood the public sentiment, it is a gratifying consideration that an ample remedy is provided by the constitution.— Claiming only the merit of rectitude of intention, I cheerfully commit this bill to the action of the legislature, and to the final judgment of the people, satisfied that on this as on all other subjects, they are the best judges of their own interests, and of the fidelity of their public servants.

Although not necessarily connected with the main subject of this communication, it seems to me not to be improper, to call the attention of the legislature again to the means of increasing the credit of the state, and of rendering it at all times more certainly available. During the existence of our present currency, mainly composed as it is of paper, fluctuations in our pecuniary affairs to a greater or less degree, are perhaps unavoidable. Apprehensions of this state of things frequently operate to deter capitalists from advancing money to the state when required for public purposes. It is believed that this evil would be principally removed if provision were made by law, for paying the loan holders the interest on the loans, at all times, in gold or silver, or in equivalent funds at their own discretion.

This would be right and just, because the money loaned to the commonwealth was of the same kind, and the interest on it should be paid in a medium as valuable to the creditors, as the original advancement. I respectfully suggest to the legislature the propriety of en-

quiring into the subject and of adopting such measures as are compatible with sound policy and enlightened justice. No occasion should be spared, either on the part of the executive or of the legislature, to impart to the credit and standing of this great commonwealth, all the strength and stability to which they are entitled by her native resources, and the industry, enterprize, and integrity of her citizens.

DAVID R. PORTER

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, }
May 9, 1839. }

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...